

Delaware Public Health and CDC Honor Michelle Power with Childhood Immunization Champion Award

DOVER – Michelle P. Power, BS, MT (ASCP), from Christiana Care Health System, has been named Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Childhood Immunization Champion for her outstanding efforts to promote childhood immunizations in Delaware. Ms. Power was recognized for her involvement with the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Christiana Care's Christiana Hospital, and for her efforts discussing the importance of childhood immunizations to postpartum parents. Power counsels clients on discussing immunizations with their baby's pediatrician after discharge from the hospital.

"I am greatly humbled and honored to receive this award," said Power, an infection preventionist. "I have had the good fortune of working with a wonderful team of health professionals who are incredibly passionate about vaccines and who have helped me emphasize how immunizations can protect the health of children and adults."

This award acknowledges the outstanding efforts of individuals who strive to ensure that children in their communities are fully immunized against 14 preventable diseases before the age of 2.

"Ensuring that every child is vaccinated on schedule is critical to protecting our children, schools, and communities from outbreaks of serious diseases," said Dr. Amanda Cohn, a pediatrician at CDC and the Executive Secretary of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices. "We could not achieve our goal of protecting children without those

committed individuals who promote immunizations at the state and local levels.”

Vaccination is considered one of the top 10 medical achievements of the 20th century and now protects us from such vaccine-preventable diseases as the flu, mumps, rubella, pertussis, polio, and certain forms of cancer.

Vaccinations prevent disease and reduce suffering, improve our quality of life, and help us live longer. The CDC believes one of several measles outbreaks last year began when an infected overseas traveler passed on the highly contagious infection to unvaccinated children in Disneyland in California. Between January and November 2015, there were 189 cases of measles – a disease virtually thought eliminated in this country. While Delaware’s vaccination rates are high, there are still outbreaks, including this year’s flu outbreak at a New Castle County prison and the 2014 outbreak of whooping cough, mainly in Kent County. Delawareans should talk to their doctors about vaccinations recommendations, and schedules.

CDC Childhood Immunization Champions were selected from a pool of health professionals, coalition members, community advocates, and other immunization leaders. State Immunization Programs coordinated the nomination process and submitted nominees to the CDC. One winner was selected in each of the participating states and the District of Columbia. “Through the Childhood Immunization Champion awards, CDC and Delaware proudly acknowledge Michelle Power’s passion, hard work, and commitment to children’s health,” said Dr. Karyl Rattay, Director of the Division of Public Health.

“We are grateful for Michelle Power’s deep commitment to keep our youngest and most fragile patients safe,” said Dr. David Paul, a neonatologist and chair of Christiana Care’s Department of Pediatrics and the chair of the Delaware Healthy Mother and Infant Consortium. “Through her tireless efforts to ensure that children are properly immunized, she is helping us

create a healthier community and a healthier Delaware.”

For profiles of other CDC Childhood Immunization Champion award winners, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/champions>.

Delaware Health and Social Services is committed to improving the quality of the lives of Delaware’s citizens by promoting health and well-being, fostering self-sufficiency, and protecting vulnerable populations. DPH, a division of DHSS, urges Delawareans to make healthier choices with the 5-2-1 Almost None campaign: eat 5 or more fruits and vegetables each day, have no more than 2 hours of recreational screen time each day (includes TV, computer, gaming), get 1 or more hours of physical activity each day, and drink almost no sugary beverages.